view of the delicate security position and because the helicopters would be flying over a sensitive part of our installations, what kind of precautions does the Ministry propose to take to ward off any espionage and other related activities?

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Sir, it does not come under my Ministry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Satya Pal Malik.

श्री सत्यपाल मलिक : मेरे सवाल का जवाब मंत्री जी ने दे दिया है। (व्यवधान)

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, it is gratifying to note that the Helicopter Corporation of India has been established to undertake manifold services in the country. I would like to know from the honourable Minister what is the number of helicopters already acquired and which are the important places, particularly the hill stations, which are sought to be immediately connected, and whether the Chandigarh-Simla route forms part of it.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Sir, the total number of helicopters received is 21—nine Westland and 12 Dauphin. We have deployed these aircraft: On ONGC—5 Westland and 8 Dauphin. To Sikkim Government we have given one on wet lease, one for Jammu and Kashmir, one for Andamans, one for Lakshadweep; two are under training and two are with Customs. We are very soon hoping to start a service in Bombay. As soon as I get the land, there I can make a helipad. Any other requirement by the State Government, subject to my aircraft's capacity and availability, I will be too happy to give the aircraft.

SHRI PUTTAPAGA RADHAKRISHNA: Sir, sometime ago I had gone through some news item that the foreign companies influence the authorities to decide on the type of helicopter that they have with them. Particularly because now-a-days a number of cases of middlemen in the deals are coming to light, I would like to ascertain from the Minister whether the decision on the type of helicopter required is foolproof and calling of tenders from other countries is also foolproof and that no middlemen are there in the deals.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Sir, there are norms set by the Government of India and we go according them.

Hike in DTC rates for schools

*205. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY†
SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Governments attention has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the Hindustan Times of 10th April, 1987 wherein it has been stated that DTC has hiked the rate for buses given on contract to schools in Delhi; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The DTC has revised the rates for school charter services from Rs. 2.50 per km. to Rs. 4.50 per km. with effect from 16-4-1987 This revision is to meet the increased direct cost of operations since the last revision in 1981.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, while I appreciate that the last revision was done only in 1981, there is a considerable hike in the transport charges that they have levied on the chartered services. I

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury.

would like to ask the Minister whether he has examined or conducted any kind of profile study from the people who are chartering the buses to see the effect that it is going to have on them and whether it is economical to ply buses like this any more.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, with a very heavy heart and after great consideration, we took this decision. We also know that it is going to weigh on them. (*Interruptions*) I do not know whether heavy heart is here or there. But for Government it was a very difficult decision.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyway, you are all very light-hearted now.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: In 1981 the rate was Rs. 2.50 per km. The basic theory of the Government is, from the DTC side no profit from the commuters, especially from the school children there is no question of the Government making profit. We can tolerate a little loss, we can afford it, but we cannot really run into total loss and give the services. After great consideration it was increased.

Secondly, it has very little effect, as far as the parents of the children are concerned, because the schools are already charging about Rs. 6 to Rs. 7 per km. from the parents already. They are charging this much through the private operators. To the buses which are not from the DTC, they are paying Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 4,000 per month. The rate comes to Rs. 6 to Rs. 7. With this enhancement of the fair or the revision by the DTC, I do not think there will be an impact of this rate. The only thing is, whatever money the schools were taking, that will be reduced from their quotas.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will you assure that the schools are not, in turn, going to hike up their fees, that they are not going to levy more charges on the parents, that they are not going to add additional hike?

Second, would the Government consider giving a concession to the children like what we do in Andhra Pradesh? Up to the age of 12 children are given free bus passes irrespective of who supplies the buses. That will encourage children to go to schools more often and the burden on the family will be lessened. Would the Government consider that in view of this or are they going to have any kind of control over the schools and whether they will prohibit the schools from further enhancing the charges that they have put on the children and the family?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: She was asking a question to the Education Ministry and Mr. Jagdish Tytler also. So, I could not get the last question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The last part is this. In Andhra Pradesh they are giving free passes to the children under 12 years. Will you give it? That is the most important question.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: The DTC buses are free for the children. It is not 12 years of age, but is five years in the case of the DTC. I can confirm that. As far as the DTC is concerned, the student concession we are already giving. It is Rs. 12.50 for a student from anywhere to anywhere, and we are losing Rs. 1 crores per year on this concession from the DTC to the schools, I don't think there will be an impact on the parents if the schools really do not take this attitude and charge them more because the cost of operation has gone high. Now the per kilometer cost is coming to Rs. 4.86, whereas we are still charging Rs. 4.50.

*206. [*The questioner (Shri Krishna Kumar Birla) was absent. For answers*, vide col. 33—35 infra]